

## Serra Foundation looks to raise awareness about vocations

A foundation that has supported priestly and religious vocations for more than forty years is inviting Catholics to offer prayers and financial support to men and women making life long commitments to the church.

The Serra Foundation was founded in 1982, emerging from Serra clubs, which were first established in the United States to support vocations. The first Serra Meeting held in Australia was in 1968, with the first clubs formally convened in Sydney and Melbourne in 1970.

The Foundation began in 1982 with \$4000 raised from across the country. In the decades since, tens of thousands of dollars have been donated and distributed to support vocations and vocations related activities.

The Chairman of the Foundation's board of trustees, Neville Hackett, said funds have been used to help seminarians and young pilgrims attend World Youth Day, people to undertake discernment, support and expansion of facilities at seminaries, assisting education and training and participate in retreats, among many other activities

"Our Church is deeply indebted to the men and women who commit to lives of prayer, service and ministry" Mr. Hackett said.

The prayerful encouragement that the Serra clubs offer and the financial assistance that the Serra Foundation can provide are a way in which the faithful can express our gratitude and love for those servants of the Lord.

Membership of Serra clubs is open to all practicing Catholic laymen, lay women and permanent deacons.

"We have several clubs across Australia that meet regularly for prayer, fellowship and discussion" Mr. Hackett said.

"In addition to our focus on those already in ministry and those considering ministry, we also look for ways to recognize and respond to God's call to holiness in our own lives"

The Serra Foundation welcomes donations from all people, whether they are members of a local Serra club or not.

Bishop Michael Kennedy of Maitland and Newcastle Diocese has served for many years as episcopal adviser to Serra and the Foundation.

The Serra Foundation's address is: P.O. 440, DONCASTER VIC 3108

Serra Australia Secretary's address is: 84/10 Waterford Park Avenue, KNOXFIELD VIC 3180

Serra Prayers

Prayer for Vocations: Oh God, who wills not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live, grant we beseech You, through the intercession of Blessed Mary, ever virgin, Saint Joseph her spouse, Saint Junipero Serra and all the saints, an increase in labourers for your Church, fellow labourers with Christ, to spend and consume themselves for souls, through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. Amen

“31 Club” Daily Prayer for Vocations: Heavenly Father, help us to respond to, and live out, our mission in the Church. Help all your people to know their vocation in life and assist them to prepare for it. For Your greater glory and for the service of your people, call many to be Priests and Religious. Give those whom you call the grace to respond generously and to persevere faithfully. Amen.